

theAlmagest

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We have developed speed, but we have shut ourselves in. Machinery that gives abundance has left us in want. Our knowledge has made us cynical; our cleverness, hard and unkind. We think too much and feel too little. More than machinery, we need humanity. More than cleverness, we need kindness and gentleness. The hate of men will pass, and dictators die, and the power they took from the people will return to the people. And so long as men die, liberty will never perish.



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"Almagest" is an Arabic word meaning "great" or "majestic." It is also the title of a book written by the ancient astronomer Ptolemy, who is pictured on the front page of our paper. Our music review, "Harmonics," is named after a Ptolemy work on music theory.

Editorial Policy

The information presented in this publication by no means reflects the opinions of the administration or staff of LSUS. The Almagest seeks to provide information for the LSUS campus and community; to involve students, faculty and staff; and to provide a public forum for ideas as guaranteed in the First Amendment of the Constitution. Comments and complaints are welcome and should be addressed to Eric Pulsifer, Editor-in-Chief. They must be accompanied by your name and e-mail address.

Letters Policy

Letters to the editor are encouraged. However, the staff reserves the right to edit letters for clarity, length, and content. Any letter submitted by a club or organization must be signed by all members of the group or by the group's president. Letters should be submitted to the Almagest office, BH 344, by 5 p.m. on the Friday preceding the Thursday publication date. Please type the letter and include your classification and major. The Almagest reserves the right not to publish submitted materials. Obscene, libelous and anonymous letters will not be printed.

The Almagest is published on Thursday mornings and is printed by the Natchitoches Times.

Corrections

No corrections this week. Any errors in this week's edition are part of our "Spot the Mistakes" game, a "Where's Waldo"-like puzzle where you find the mistakes so we don't have to. Enjoy.

Logic Puzzle: Sudoku

Fill in the grid so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the numbers 1-9. There is only one solution to the puzzle.

	4		7		3			
	3				6			
	1		9	8			6	
					9	6	3	
3			1	6		2	5	
	6	8	2	3	4			
	2	7						
			3					
		3		2	1	9	7	

Difficult

Girls & SPORTS



WEATHER

TODAY:
Mostly Sunny
Hi: 78 Lo: 57

FRIDAY:
Isolated T- Storms
Hi: 79 Lo: 63

SATURDAY:
Scattered T- Storms
Hi: 77 Lo: 62

SUNDAY:
Mostly Cloudy
Hi: 77 Lo: 59



MONDAY:
Partly Cloudy
Hi: 78 Lo: 60

TUESDAY:
Mostly sunny
Hi: 80 Lo: 60

WEDNESDAY:
Scattered Showers
Hi: 83 Lo: 61

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Liberal Art

In the past, I have failed to take the time to write to The Almagest to voice my opinions on the ideas expressed in the newspaper. However, this time I could not just let it pass. I believe that the April 20, 2006 issue of The Almagest has crossed the line of common decency. I found the image "Portrait of an American Soldier in Iraq" by Mike Pizzolato highly tasteless and offensive. I am not sure exactly what point Mr. Pizzolato thinks he is making nor do I understand what would motivate someone to authorize the publication of this image. I have friends who have served in the armed forces in Iraq, and I doubt that they or their families would find Mr. Pizzolato's image very amusing.

It is interesting to note that the very same April 20 issue of The Almagest contains an editorial piece by Mike Schwalke criticizing the University Police for practices that Mr. Schwalke finds to be disrespectful to the American flag. I appreciate Mr. Schwalke's obvious respect for the American flag, but I find it ironic that The Almagest is eager to attack to University Police to preserve the image of the American flag while simultaneously degrading and insulting the image of the American soldier.

No doubt any response by The Almagest to this letter will be sure to highlight the free speech and free press clauses contained in the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. I am well aware of these rights and completely agree that The Almagest has the right and ability to publish images such as the one in question. However, it seems that many of those who claim the First Amendment as defense for the publication of offensive or tasteless words or images are the same individuals who neglect to show the proper respect for those who are protecting those very freedoms. I believe that Mr. Pizzolato's image has accomplished this very objective.

I do not claim to be an art expert by any means. Perhaps there is some deep and inspiring significance to this image that I have overlooked. If so, I would be grateful to Mr. Pizzolato and the member of The Almagest staff who authorized this image's publication if they would enlighten me.

—Daniel Shockley
Senior, Accounting Major

My cartoon is accused of being indecent, tasteless and offensive while degrading the American soldier. However, I feel "Portrait of an American Soldier in Iraq" supports the American soldier by exposing his trauma and the trauma of a nation bogged down in a war that has become a quagmire.

Moreover, what crosses the line of decency is not the cartoon, but the reality it represents. Soldiers are dying daily like this, with limbs exploded in all different directions, while parents of soldiers must go online and buy armor for their sons. Soldiers come home quietly every day in flag-draped coffins your government will not allow you to see. Support for the war has fallen, mainly because the war has little if anything to do with the terrorists who attacked us on September 11th.

Images like my cartoon are unpleasant but truthful. In the 1960s, I remember how a nightly flow of bloody, yet powerful television imagery helped end the war in Vietnam, another quagmire from which we did not learn important lessons. When the Almagest published "Home from Iraq" on February 23, no one objected to my cartoon of a mother sobbing over a flag-draped casket. When they published "Pieta Americana" on April 6, no one objected to my cartoon of a Lady-Liberty Madonna holding a symbolic Christ figure with the words, "U.S. War Dead" on his chest and an American flag on his loins. When the school's Visual Arts Club put on a highly-publicized art show in February at the University Center gallery now at the Louisiana State Museum, no one

objected to a graphic beheading in my cartoon, "The Sleep of Reason produces Monsters: Al-Quaeda beheads Nicholas Berg."

So what part of death in "Portrait" is degrading and offensive—the truthful, accurate part? The part that holds a mirror to the way our soldiers are dying? If so, I make no apologies for offending anyone.

More importantly, the saddest fact of this war is that if we could wave a magic wand and be out of Iraq now with every problem there solved, we still would not have avenged the day the terrorists flew planes into those buildings

And that, I find degrading and offensive.

—Mike Pizzolato
Fine Arts, Senior

Here at the Almagest, we always appreciate a well thought out letter from another student, even if it is an angry one.

We're going to avoid mentioning the First Amendment (except here where we mention your predicting our mentioning of it) to justify our existence as a flag-burning, Communist and Satan-worshipping, infant-sacrificing group of pacifistic hippies. In fact, neither the First Amendment nor our political views are responsible for our decision to run the cartoon. Our reason for running Pizzolato's cartoons are simple: he's a student and we are a student newspaper. It has nothing to do with our opinion or the Bill of Rights. One of our jobs is to provide a forum for students to put forth their opinions. We feel the most important issue here is your right as a student. It is our goal to make the Almagest reflect the whole of the student body. It is our privilege to provide you with a way to voice your thoughts to anyone who cares to read, but this is sometimes quite tricky since the Almagest is under-read here on campus. Seldom do we get any student responses to any article or editorial comment.

"Portrait of an American Soldier in Iraq" is Mike Pizzolato's third comic submitted to the Almagest. Based on his past work, it's safe to say that he is extremely saddened by

the ability of humans to harm one another. There is a distinction that must be made between disagreeing with war and hoping to see harm come to our troops. Most of us in the Shreveport/Bossier area have friends and family members who have served in the armed forces or are currently overseas. With this being said, we agree with you that Pizzolato's cartoon was not amusing, but we doubt the artist's intent was to elicit chortles. We sincerely hope that nobody finds Pizzolato's grave "Portrait" an amusing image.

We at the Almagest feel it is not our place to tell you or Pizzolato that your opinions are tasteless or offensive. When we run student opinion it's not based off your First Amendment rights but your rights as a student. You have a right to have your opinions voiced in your student publication, even if it may piss some people off. We're sorry that you find this image offensive. We find it offensive too. Mr. Pizzolato's sentiment—framing the horrors of our times in a crude medium—has nothing to do with that. We applaud his work. He gets right to the heart of the matter and expresses fear, sorrow and frustration without getting involved in the political arguments that are tertiary to the real issue. No matter how you feel about the subject, if controversial opinion like this cannot be published in a college newspaper, where can they be voiced? We are here in college to have our most basic notions of ourselves and our worlds challenged and to become better people from the process.

No matter how you feel about Iraq, war is a terrible thing and ignoring the fact that Americans are dying horrific deaths every day doesn't change that. We can never forget the tremendous price of war so that when it comes time to fight we may be absolutely certain the war is worth the cost. We can close our eyes to the truth all we want but it still remains. If a "tasteless" cartoon can remind us of the seriousness of war for only one moment, then we can see no reason to keep it from our readers.

This week we include Mike Pizzolato's fourth contribution to the Almagest. "Murder in Memphis" is a reminder that on April 4, 1968, one of the greatest forces for a change towards decency, justice and peace was shot in the neck and killed because he was an agent for good.



"Murder in Memphis" by Mike Pizzolato

Referee Rogers wins Disney trip

by Chrissy Chiri



Rogers

LSUS student Danny Rogers was recently picked, among only 19 other college students in the United States, to referee in the National Intramural Basketball Championship. So what is he going to do now? He's going to Disney Land, but he's not going to have to pay for it.

Rogers, a junior community health major, earned an all-expense paid trip to Anaheim, Calif., because of his excellent refereeing efforts. He was chosen by the counsel, which consisted of experienced referees, at the Regional Intramural Basketball Tournament in Ft. Worth, Texas. Out

of the 26 referees who called games the weekend in Ft. Worth, only five were chosen to go to Anaheim. There were 15 other refs around the country who were chosen as well.

At the regional tournament, games were held from Friday evening to Sunday afternoon. Three-man crews were used, and after each game the crew was evaluated by a member of the counsel. They were told their strong and weak points and given tips on how to improve. By Saturday, 18 referees were picked to call the playoff games and then six were chosen out of those to call the men's and women's championship games. Rogers was one of the six and from there, five were picked to go to the national tournament.

"I am leaving on May 4 and will have games to ref on Friday, Saturday and Sunday," Rogers said. "I am excited about it. I am really looking

forward to it."

Rogers has been refereeing for four years, including two years of high school. He has been calling games for the LSUS intramurals for three years and plans on continuing.

Assistant director of Rec Sports Wendi Stanley said, "Danny is a hard-working ref, and I thought it was a huge honor for him to be picked. The counsel at TCU didn't know him so he had to prove himself, and he did that. It definitely represents LSUS well."

The 22-year-old Rogers is having his plane ticket, three-day pass to Disney Land, hotel stay at Disney Land and meals paid for. He said he has never been to Disney Land or California.

"It's almost like going to the NCAA tournament for referees," Stanley said. "I know he'll do a great job, and he definitely deserves to go."

SPORTS UPDATE

BASEBALL

LSUS vs. Belhaven College

4/21 game 1

BC 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 - 0 6 2

LSUS 2 0 1 0 0 1 6 X - 10 18 0

WP: Jewell, (6-1)

LP: Fultz, (6-2)

4/22 game 2

BC 0 0 2 0 0 1 0 - 5 9 4

LSUS 3 0 0 2 3 0 X - 8 8 1

WP: Lafitte, (4-1)

LP: Lawrence, (3-3)

4/22 game 3

BC 0 0 0 4 1 0 0 - 5 8 0

LSUS 0 0 0 1 0 1 1 - 3 12 0

WP: Royals, (7-4)

LP: Clayman, (6-3)

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Fast and furious

World's fastest table sport ricochets into the UC

by Mike Schwalke

Sandwiched in between a throng of eager table tennis players and a glass partition sits the LSUS Rec Sports air hockey table. Most students who crowd around the yellow-and-black stand are eager to play some table tennis or are craning to see the giant TV on the other side of the glass wall. Occasionally an errant ping-pong ball will glance off of the windy surface.

It was an inauspicious setting for the Rec Sports Air Hockey Tournament which took place over four Common Hours from April 11-20. The competitors crawled out from all corners of campus to test their mettle in the world's fastest table sport. The finals had the intensity of a heavyweight prize fight and the ambiance of a back-alley brawl. After several rounds of furious, sweaty competition, Jonathan Slaton defeated fan-favorite Ty Taylor in straight sets.

"It's a bittersweet win," said Slaton, a sophomore business administration major.

"I've got no skill. I hardly ever play." He said that in other table sports his past performances had been mediocre, and he was somewhat confused by his success.

Despite his unassuming façade, Slaton chewed through his competition like a rabid opossum on cheap amphetamines. On the first day of play he pleaded with his opponent. "Don't let me win," he said without a sliver of irony.

In the final round of the championship match, he exploded to a 5-0 lead and forced Taylor to scramble for points.

"He slowed it down on me," Taylor, a senior computer science major, said. "He knew if it was fast-paced he couldn't get me." Taylor came into the finals without dropping a single game and seemed confident that his superior hand-eye coordination and cat-like reflexes would serve him well.

"(Slaton) is a worthy opponent," Taylor said. "I've got to give him props."

According to Taylor, the air hockey table is a recent addition to the Rec Sports lounge.

Wendi Stanley, assistant director for Rec Sports, said that the goal of the tournament was "just to get people involved. Obviously, we're getting a different clientele."

Most of the competitors were wayward ping-pong players looking to kill time.

"I'm not particularly passionate about air hockey," Smink Sangsura, a senior chemistry major, said. He described his style as defensive, much like Slaton's. Sangsura was toppled in the first day of competition.

Another ping-pong aficionado, Ibrahim Salama, fared no better.

"I didn't prepare myself," Salama, a freshman pre-radiological technology major, said. "I just wanted to participate."

Those without the sheer audacity to dominate were knocked off quick. Both Slaton and Taylor seemed predestined to meet in the finals. Both proud masters of the wind rink locked eyes and prepared for an eat-or-be-eaten showdown as primal as yin versus yang, Superman versus Luthor, cat

versus dog. Taylor appeared as a swirling vortex of fury, eager to attack. Slaton acted the pensive Buddha.

After all the lackluster competitors were cleared in the

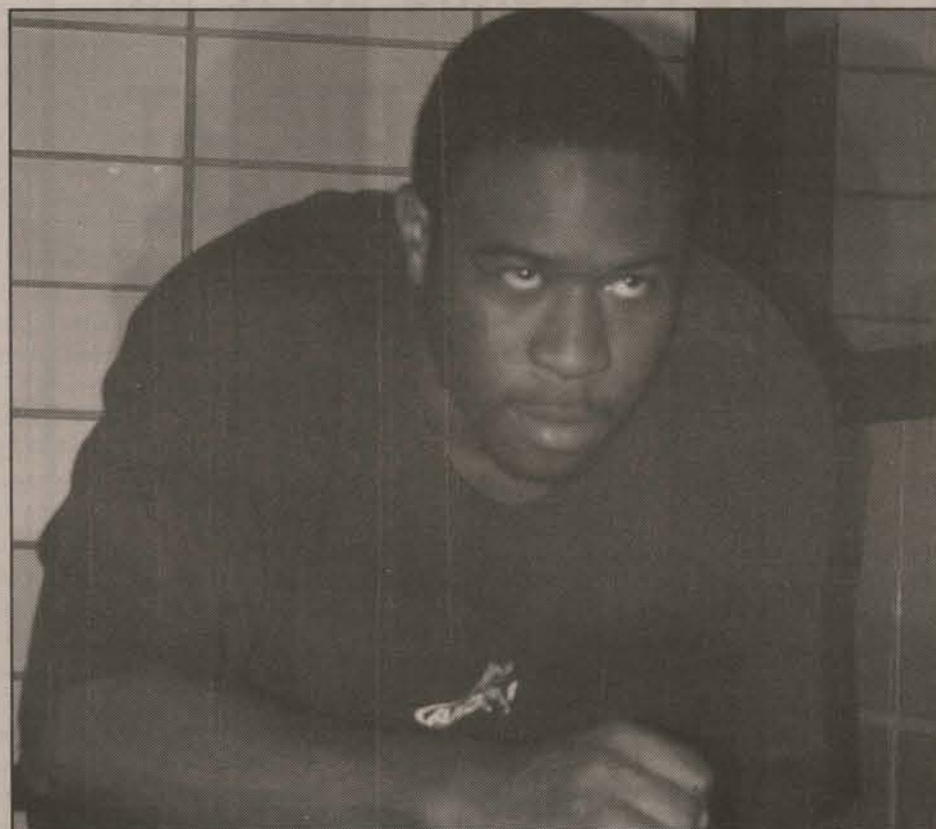
early rounds, the two brightest stars were ready to shine. And after a fierce battle it was Slaton, the humble everyman, who came out victorious.



Jonathan Slaton is the 2006 Air Hockey Champ.

2006 Rec Sports Air Hockey Championship

	1	2	3
Slaton	7	7	x
Taylor	5	4	x



PHOTOS BY MIKE SCHWALKE

Ty Taylor (left) and Jonathan Slaton (right) face off in an epic battle of titans reminiscent of Ali-Frazier. Slaton dominated the showdown with an onslaught of angle-shot comebackers. Taylor faltered underneath Slaton's cast-iron defense.

Retiring professors

School says goodbye to familiar faculty faces

by Coleman Robison

LSUS will be saying goodbye to five faculty members at the end of the semester, four of whom are full professors.

Dr. Charlene Hanford Barlow, professor of communications; Dr. James Goodrich, professor of chemistry and physics; Dr. Steven Lynch, professor of biological sciences; Dr. David Anderson, professor of history and social sciences; and Dr. Marguerite Plummer, associate professor of history and director of the Pioneer Heritage Center, will all retire at the close of the semester.

"I am retiring from being a professor; I am not retiring from being a biologist," said Lynch. "I will be on campus finishing up projects. I am working with several plant and insect collections."

Plummer, who joined the Pioneer Heritage Center in 1982 and the faculty in 1992, said, "I want to do more things with my husband, who has been retired a long time, catch up on reading and writing of my own, and just have more time for family and adult Sunday school."

The story is similar for Anderson, who is principally a geographer, and plans to continue some dangling research projects.

"I will be going to Chaco Culture National Historic Park this summer," he said. The park is located in northwest New Mexico and was once a center for ancient Puebloan culture. Anderson will be studying rock art and comparing it to the landscape of the park.

"Other than that, I will be enjoying a standard retirement—traveling and

working around the house," said Anderson.

Barlow will not be returning to campus and will unfortunately be unable to focus on her field.

"My personal life prohibits my coming back as an adjunct professor," said Barlow. "My husband is in poor health, and I recently had to place my mother in a nursing facility. My time will be spent with them."

When Barlow arrived at LSUS in 1968, just one year after it opened, the school had only two buildings—now the sciences building and technology center. She recalls that LSUS was at the far edge of town, in the country, and the closest shops were in Shreve City.

According to Barlow, she would have taught for free for the first 20 to 25 years if she had been independently wealthy.

"They called us the school in the middle of the cotton patches," said Barlow. "I was hired on the spot. I was 27 then and am now 65. It's time for new blood."

And according to Barlow, school integration and the use of the Internet have been the two most important things to happen in education.

Goodrich wants to come and sit in on classes that he never had the opportunity to be a part of, and his wife wants him to be able to do more things with her and family and friends.

While each retiring professor is ready to go, some are leaving words of comfort for the campus or advice for newer faculty.

"I challenge students to look at things from the big picture," said Lynch.



DERBICK MITCHAM

SAB Coffee House Series performer Austin Willacy plays in the Port Tuesday as part of Spring Fling. Spring Fling continues today and Friday.



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"I was 27 then
and am now 65.
It's time for new
blood."

Dr. Charlene Hanford-Barlow
Professor of Communications

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LSUS lays foundation for community involvement

■ LSUS starts campus chapter of Habitat for Humanity

by Kisha Blackshire

In March students began an LSUS chapter of Habitat for Humanity in order to raise community awareness as well as give back to the community.

Habitat for Humanity is known for building homes for those in need and unable to purchase homes through conventional means.

"It's not a handout," said Kristen Johnson, executive director of Habitat for Humanity of Northwest Louisiana. "You need to have a job, but the homes are financed at zero percent interest."

Mark Froom, a sophomore biology major, said, "We were looking for clubs that did this, and we're trying to establish something to give back to the community." He and a handful of other students met with the

Habitat for Humanity in order to find out what steps to take in order to make this possible.

"I'm real excited they're taking interest," said Johnson. "We will help as much as we possibly can by providing material, education and speeches."

Froom, one of the originators of the LSUS chapter, and other participating students are now in the process of broaching fundraising ideas for the cause. They are working with the Minority Association as well as the Biology Club to receive help with and other ideas for fundraising.

In order for the LSUS chapter to become a national organization, the participating students must produce a constitution before the July application deadline when they can apply to become an official chapter.

There are currently only six students involved; however, Froom's goal is to get more than 20 people involved in this foundation.



PHOTO BY PAT JOYNER COURTESY OF HABITAT FOR HUMANITY OF NORTHWEST LOUISIANA

Over 100 people are now living in their own homes throughout Shreveport thanks to Habitat for Humanity of Northwest Louisiana. Habitat houses are built by volunteers and the people who will later inhabit them.

"We want to leave a strong presence, and we want it to be worry free in the next two years," said Christie Trenado,

junior biology major.

Habitat for Humanity was established in 1990 and has built homes in area neighbor-

hoods such as Valencia Park, Cedar Grove, Highland, Warner Park and South Bossier.

Committee encourages campus beautification

by Ragan Dickens

The term "beautification circle" probably does not ring a bell in the mind of students, but most have noticed these areas outside of the Technology Center and the Sciences Building. These circles of flowers and colorful plants are the brainchild of Dr. James Ingold, professor of biological sciences. He came up with this idea last summer and contacted the head of physical plant for approval.

"These circles outside of the building really help spruce up the campus," said Ivy Brightwell, sophomore biochemistry major. "This campus lacks creativity and color, and this really benefits the cause." Ingold said, "The point of the circles (is) to provide color instead of just greenery."

The Biology Club adopted one of the four circles as their own to make beautiful. They stripped the little grass that was growing under the trees, and planted colorful flowers. The club waters their circle of flowers two times a week. The flowers were purchased with

Biology Club funds. Ingold said that they have some bulbs that are waiting to come up right now. The circle is not completely finished.

Lots of positive feedback has come as a result of the circles. Ingold said that students especially enjoy eating their lunches outside of the Technology Center on a bench inside of the circle. The only problem Ingold noted was squirrels, but he quickly responded, "We expect that from squirrels, right?"

Dr. Rebecca Nolan, professor of psychology, accepted the job to become the chair of the Campus Beautification Committee. Nolan said, "It's a big job—more work than I expected."

Nolan spoke to the Psychology Club about taking on one of the circles as their school project. They agreed and tackled the circle by weeding it and planting flowers in the area. She said the club does not have an organized maintenance plan for keeping the circle up, but Nolan does encourage students from the club to stop by and pick a weed or two when they



MIKE SCHWALKE

The circle outside the Sciences Building has been the Biology Club's pet project.

have time. The Psychology Club used money from its own personal bank account to fund the project, thus costing the university no money.

Nolan said that trimming trees around campus is a main

focus of her beautification committee. A former chair of the psychology, Dr. George Kemp, department provided funding for the current trees and greenery throughout the campus. When these trees were planted,

there were eight grounds crew staff. Now the university only has four groundskeepers. According to Nolan, this is the reason for forming the committee—to help trim trees and create these beautification circles.

by Derrick Mitcham &
Eric Pulsifer

The video game holy day of E3 is almost upon us and with it comes tons of announcements that will affect what gamers will be playing for the next several years.

E3, the Electronic Entertainment Expo is held once a year in May. The three-day event is the source of much gaming gossip and fanboy drooling and is the exciting time of year that companies unveil their upcoming projects.

While we know what three companies will be the stars of the event (Sony, Nintendo and Microsoft) there's plenty left to be discussed. Will we get to see Halo 3? The next-gen Grand Theft Auto? How far in debt will gamers have to go to get their hands on a Playstation 3? How will Microsoft deal with the arrival of Nintendo and mortal enemy Sony in the next-gen console war? Is the Revolution the stupidest idea since the Virtual Boy, or will people fall in love with its original take on gaming?

With E3 beginning on May 10 let's take a look at what we know so far about the upcoming war in gaming so you know how much in student loans you'll need to take out this year.

Even if you couldn't care less about gaming, the next-gen console wars may be more significant to what goes on in your living room over the next decade than you might imagine. The future of home movies is at stake as well. Get ready to buy all eight seasons of MacGyver over again in either HD DVD or Blu-Ray format so you can experience them in high-def on your HDTV.

HD DVD and Blu-Ray Discs are set to face off in a battle mirroring the VHS and Beta-max of the 1980s with Sony and Microsoft backing different horses. Sony's Playstation 3 is choosing Blu-Ray with hopes that the predicted prevalence of its system in homes may spread the acceptance of the new format. Microsoft's Xbox 360 uses normal DVDs but will have an add-on later that allows the system to serve as an HD DVD player. HD DVDs hold 30GB, far more than a normal DVD, but Blu-Ray discs hold 50GB and are quite tough (they claim to be able to withstand an at-



tack by screwdriver and still play fine). But even with all that going for it, Blu-Ray hardware seems to be significantly more expensive than HD DVD players, something that may turn off buyers who have already spent thousands on a high-definition TV, sound system and wires.

In the gaming arena, the PS3 and the 360 seem to be equally matched under the hood. Still, each system claims to be more powerful than the other and there's plenty of debate over who's right. Nintendo plans to avoid the whole mess by admitting up front that the Revolution won't be able to produce the same caliber of high-end visuals you'll find on the PS3 and 360. Nintendo hopes to place itself in its own market by creating an affordable and innovative console that will appeal to new budget-minded gamers and those seeking something more substantial than prettier versions of old games.

Son of Sony

Believe it or not, Sony was once considered the underdog in the video game console war. When the company offered the original PlayStation up against

juggernaut Nintendo, many were wondering why Sony would even waste its time. But Sony was not to be denied and in what seemed like an act from the heavens, Nintendo was unseated from its front-post position as the PlayStation took the throne.

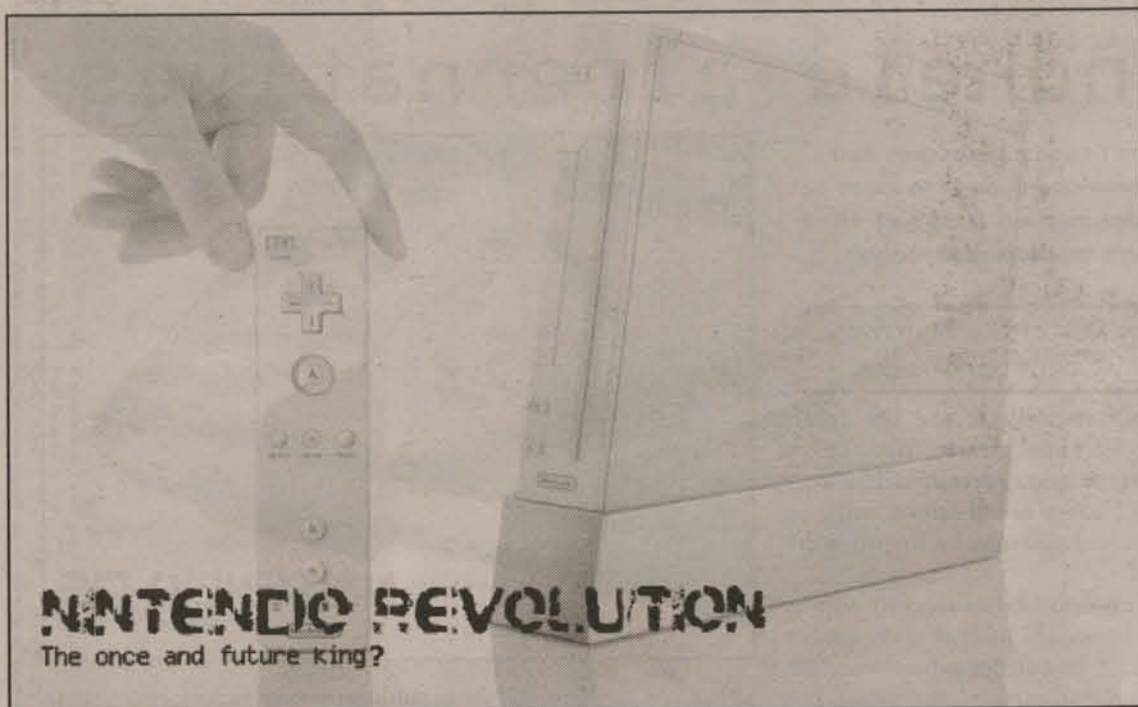
Fast forward 11 years and not much has changed. Sony is still the king of the jungle, and everyone else seems to be playing catch up. Despite Microsoft beating the competition out the gate by releasing their next

generation system first, the gaming world is waiting and watching for Sony's next move. The PlayStation 3 is coming sometime this November. It is going to be Internet ready right out of the box and come standard with a 60 gigabyte hard drive. Like the PS2, it will be backwards compatible, meaning it will play most PlayStation 1 and 2 games. There will be all sorts of USB ports, Ethernet ports and other places for you tech junkies to plug your many gadgets into. Featuring

specs on par with an Alienware tower and offering support for high definition televisions (so all 10 of people out there with high def televisions should feel lucky) means the PS3 should be loved by the tech literate.

The most discouraging information about the PS3 is its price. Ken Kutaragi, father of the PlayStation, explained early on that the PS3 would be, how do you say, expensive, claiming people would want to work more just to be able to afford the system. Expect to see a





price tag somewhere under a thousands dollars. Seriously. All available info indicates that the system won't see a price point under \$500, so start pinching those pennies.

The previously wealthy gamers who shell out for the PS3 can look forward to countless must-have titles like the next-gen versions of "Metal Gear Solid", "Grand Theft Auto", "Final Fantasy" and "Madden (or whatever the new name will be) Football." Gamers will need to dig even deeper in their pockets to pick up all the over-priced accessories Sony will be forcing down our throats. Tell your cheap-ass friend to buy his own controller.

With E3 coming up right around the corner, it is likely that Sony will answer many of the questions still remaining

about their new console and give people a chance to actually see it in action. If they are able to continue on the same path they've been on all these years, there's no reason not to assume they will remain number one in the console wars.

Viva la Revolution?

While young Sony may have propelled gaming into the realm of cool, no company has been more instrumental in the shaping of video games today than Nintendo. After ushering in the age of 3D gaming, Nintendo was left stumbling to keep up with the competition, eventually coming in dead last in this generation of gaming with the GameCube.

Hoping to learn from their mistakes, Nintendo is saying they aren't even trying to com-

pete with Sony and Microsoft in the upcoming console wars.

The Revolution's defining feature has to be its one-handed controller. The console can detect the controller's position in three-dimensional space, meaning it can detect motion, tilt and yaw. Nintendo is hoping that this revolutionary controller can get people who normally wouldn't give gaming a shot.

A nifty slot-loading drive that takes DVD-sized Revolution discs and those tiny GameCube discs and four GCN controller ports make the Revolution stand out in the area of backwards compatibility. But what's really bound to impress is the system's "Virtual Console," an online collection of classic titles from NES, SNES, N64, Sega and TurboGrafx 16.

While the price of the sys-

tem is unknown, Nintendo says they will be the cheapest system on the market. Each of the past four generations of Nintendo consoles have launched at \$199, a trend that may continue. Expect a price between \$99 and \$249 if Nintendo really wants to undercut the competition.

House of Gates

After getting their asses kicked by Sony and just barely beating Nintendo, Microsoft is hoping the early bird can get the worm.

On May 12, 2005, MTV held an unveiling party for the Xbox 360, giving the world its first glimpse into the future of gaming. Overall, the system's coming out party was weak at best but still created quite a bit of buzz throughout the gaming world. Later that month at E3, video gaming insiders and other attendees got a chance to see some titles in action and what the system was capable of. The time leading up to the launch was laden with new game previews, more technical specifications and the tantalizing realization that a new next generation of gaming was upon us.

Nov. 22, 2005, marked the release of the XBOX 360 in the United States, Canada and Puerto Rico, followed by a Dec. 2 release in Europe. Not only was this the first foray into the next generation battle, but the 360 was also the first system to launch simultaneously across four regions, a move that would hurt the launch early on.

Initial shortages led to super pricey bundles on eBay and other online stores. Nintendo faced a similar problem with the release of the Nintendo 64. Sony also faced this issue when it released the remodeled PS2. Microsoft followed the trend and faced huge shortages leaving cautious gamers who pre-ordered the 360 months in advance with no console to take home on launch day.

The decision to release two versions of the system, one lacking a hard drive, was seen as a bad move on Microsoft's part. Developers wouldn't be able to confidently take advantage of the hard drive when designing games if not every system would be equipped with one.

Despite some shortcomings, the 360 is extremely pow-

erful. At its release, it was stronger than 95 percent of the personal computers being sold on the market.

The system can support up to four wireless controllers and three wired. Fortunately, the 360's controller seems to be a hit with fans unlike the original Xbox's bulky disaster of a gamepad.

The system supports DVD playback, this time without a special remote control. HD DVD support is down the line, though it won't be utilized in games.

Gamers can plug various peripherals — such as digital cameras, MP3 players and computer accessories — into one of the system's three USB ports. Microsoft says the 360 was built to be the center of the user's entertainment experience.

Though some of the early games looked like little more than Xbox games with a higher resolution, games such as "Call of Duty 2," "Ghost Recon: Advanced Warfighter" and "The Elder Scrolls: Oblivion" showcased the 360's power.

"Too Human," "Gears of War" and "Crackdown" are just a few of the highly anticipated games being released exclusively on the system and are sure to have 360 owners jumping for joy.

There are two configurations of the 360 available: the Xbox 360 Premium package for \$399, which comes with all the usual stuff plus a headset, wireless controller, Ethernet cable, detachable hard drive and for a limited time, universal remote control, and the Xbox 360 Core System for \$299 lacking a hard drive, the chrome finish of the premium system and with a wired controller instead of wireless. Each system also comes with a free Xbox Live silver membership that allows players to download free demos, movie trailers and other neat extras.

After E3 next month, gamers around the world will have even more information on all the upcoming next-gen consoles and some sweet new games. Until then, some of the burning questions in gamers' minds will remain unanswered.



In other news

Splitting headache

People know drugs will make you do crazy things, but an Oregon man found that out firsthand when he shot himself in the head 12 times with a nail gun. The unidentified 33-year-old man went to a hospital complaining of a headache when it was discovered by doctors that he had 12 two-inch nails embedded in his skull. Amazingly, doctors were able to remove all the nails from his head, without his suffering any serious lasting effects. He was reported to be suicidal and high on methamphetamines at the time of the incident.

Christmas already? Not quite

Police in Hayward, Calif., thought they had caught a burglar last Saturday morning when they answered a house call but instead found a naked man stuck in his chimney. "He didn't have a stitch on him," said Lt. Gary Branson of the Hayward Police Department of 23-year-old Michael Urbano who had locked himself out of his house and tried to enter his one-story home through the chimney. Urbano got stuck when a cable-television wire he used to lower himself snapped and left him jammed in a section of the chimney. He said he took off his clothes because he felt they would rub against the walls and slow him down.

Human torch

Smokers might want to be careful about what's on their faces before lighting that next cigarette. A 60-year-old hospital patient in England died after a highly-flammable skin ointment on his face caught fire when he tried to light up. The unidentified man reportedly stepped out onto a fire escape landing to smoke, and when he tried to light the cigarette his head became engulfed in flames. He was rushed to another hospital where he was pronounced dead from severe burns. Officials refused to reveal the man's skin condition or what medication had been prescribed to him.

I hate you mom

A Japanese man has confessed to killing his mother after she nagged him about getting a job. Last May Yaoki Osawa, 37, bludgeoned his mother over the head with a stone after she fell down some stairs following the argument and then proceeded to dismember her body, encasing parts like the skull in cement and grilling others over an electric hot plate before tossing it all out with the trash. When asked why he disposed of his mother in such a way, Osawa simply said "I was at a loss about what to do with it."

The s*t has hit the fan

A North Carolina family was forced to abandon their home after utility workers forced 3,000 gallons of raw sewage into their home. Workers were at the home of Mac and Meg McCormick attempting to clear a grease clog from a sewer line but inadvertently cleared out a ton of space in the sewer and flooded the home. The McCormicks say the city has promised to clean up the mess and repair the damages, but they have yet to receive anything in writing. City officials have declined to comment on the incident.

Handheld alternatives

■ You don't need a big screen and a bank-breaking console to enjoy cutting-edge gaming. Here's a look at gaming's smallest contenders.

by Derrick Mitcham &
Eric Pulsifer

It's easy to criticize the DS before you've given the bizarre dual-screen portable system a spin. A couple dozen unbelievably badass touch-screen utilizing games later and you may be singing a different tune.

The Nintendo DS has worked its way up in the handheld market with quality software and an intriguing hardware design.

The second screen may have seemed gimmicky at first, but games like "Wario Ware: Touched," "Nintendogs" and "Mario Kart DS" have shown that gaming with two screen has its benefits.

The DS gets battery life of up to 10 hours on a single charge and uses flash cards so there's no waiting through loading screens, two big problems with the PSP.

While Nintendo has always had a more family-friendly image, the DS has also made some efforts to appeal to hardcore gamers with titles like "Castlevania: Dawn of Sorrow," "Resident Evil: Deadly Silence" and ultra-addictive puzzler "Meteos." A slimmer, sexier and brighter version of the system (called the DS Lite) is expected stateside soon.

Hypothetically speaking, let's call Nintendo "Mike Tyson" (in his prime of course) and everyone else who entered the handheld market is like a six-year-old girl. But things may be changing as Sony is finally giving Nintendo a bit of a fight with the release of its very own handheld goliath, the PlayStation Portable in an attempt to overthrow the current market champ.

Sony set the video game world ablaze with the unveiling of its new machine at a press conference during E3 (Electronic Entertainment Expo) in May 2004. The system was released 10 months later beginning the first real handheld war gamers have ever seen. With no clear predictions on which system would claim the portable throne, both Sony and Nintendo readied their arsenals for the first legitimate competition for the handheld gaming market.

Encased in a sleek and sexy package, the PSP offered the world the first true glimpse of next generation technology, in a portable system. With graphical capabilities identical to that of the PlayStation 2, the system was more than capable of contending against other handhelds as well as some home consoles.

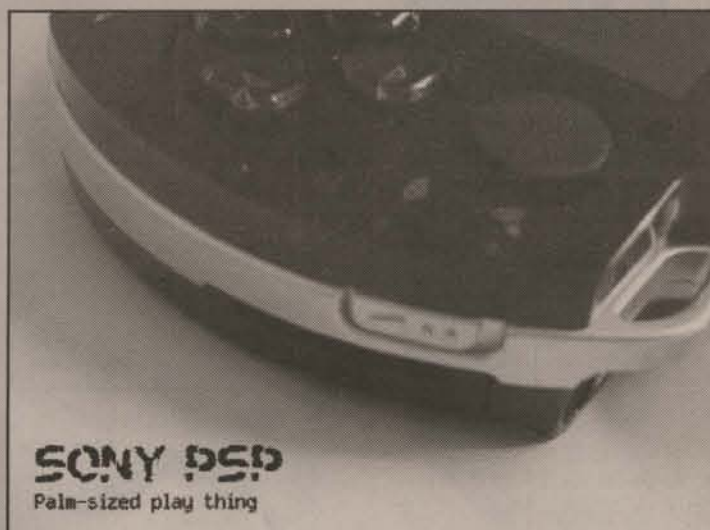
The PSP was released in a Value Pack for \$249.99 and included the console, battery, a 32 MB Memory Stick Duo, earphones with remote control, a slip-case, a wrist strap and a Sampler Disc when it first hit the market. It can now be purchased in a Core Pack, which contains only the system and a battery, or a Giga Pack, that comes with everything in the Value Pack but with a 1GB memory card.



The PSP is capable of many functions such as movie playback, picture viewing, playing music, Web browsing and of course, game playing. The system's beautiful TFT LCD screen sports a 480 x 272 pixel resolution and is capable of 16.77 million colors. It is perfect for all of your viewing needs but is subject to easy scratching. Sony also instituted a new proprietary medium for the system called UMDs, or Universal Media Disks. These disks have large amounts of storage space, which has prompted some movie studios to release full-length movies on the medium with prices comparable to those of DVDs.

The PSP offers a wide variety of games appealing to gamers' various tastes. You can take your pick from M-rated titles like "Grand Theft Auto" and "Syphon Filter" or more family-friendly fun with "Ape Escape" and "Bust-A-Move." However, critics have accused Sony of offering too many sloppy ports of existing games for the PSP. Developers are learning better ways to harness the power of the machine which allows them to include more content into the games. Who would have ever thought that people would be able to play a game as large as "GTA" on a handheld system? It almost seems like a dream, a violent, prostitute-murdering dream.

Although the system is only one year old, there are already rumors swirling around about a possible redesign and even a successor. Many fans are hoping the US will get the white version of the PSP that's solely available in Japan and Korea, which is currently available only through importers. With the growing popularity of the PSP, Sony may eventually surpass Nintendo in the handheld market.



by eric pulsifer



music for the discerning listener



Drowaton
Starlight Mints

In my time working for the Almagest I've reviewed my fair share of CDs. Perhaps this strict regimen of new music every week is to blame for a very peculiar problem I've developed over the years. I, like any person who has two ears and brain between them, love music. But like a husband whose passion slowly fades for his bride, I can't help but notice that my lack of fidelity grows with each new CD I hear. I can't return home like a faithful

mate to the ones I have loved so long. Have I turned into the snob who scoffs at things that are past their prime and calls albums that have been out for a few weeks old news?

Like an addict, the buzz from things that used to thrill me has begun to fade, and I'm always experimenting with something for a short time and then entirely abandoning it as it has no more pleasure to offer me. I hope my future is not so bleak as the crack heads you see on HBO documentaries.

We all have melody dancing in our heads. Sometimes it comes out as a whistle, sometimes a percussion solo with a pen on the edge of the desk. I think that my drive to always look for something else is a fascination with the idea that out of all the countless tunes I could paint with my gray matter, I'd never create one just like you, or John Lennon, or Chancellor Marsala, or Fidel Castro or Nolan Ryan. These sonic fingerprints are often similar but always unique.

I could certainly never create a tune like Allen Vest, frontman of Starlight Mints. Starlight Mints are one of three decent bands from Oklahoma (one is the Flaming Lips, the band they're compared to by default, and the other isn't Hanson or

Color Me Badd).

"Drowaton" is their third album and debut release with Barsuk Records. They're named after red-striped peppermints. If that doesn't clue you in to their sound, I don't know what will.

Even with pop prowess beyond their years, the closest thing to a hit the band ever had was "Popsickle," a brilliant little pop song not even featured on any of their albums (it came on a bonus disc with their debut).

The band's songs are alarmingly catchy but have a death-defying shelf life. "Drowaton" is a blast, even if its not quite as good as its predecessors.

The album fuses traditional pop basics with the creativity you'd expect from some weird Oklahoma guys. Strings, piano and horns add flair to the typical guitar/bass set up while Vest's voice and cheery, often nonsensical lyrics mix with whimsical woo-hoo's and tra-la-la-la's.

As much as I adore talking about the latest in music, I long for old flames to return to. "Drowaton" is another album from Starlight Mints that remains on that very short list of what I'm willing to hear over and over again. Call it sacrilege, but I like them even better than one of those other decent Oklahoma bands.

April 25 New Releases: Arctic Monkeys "Who The F*ck Are Arctic Monkeys EP," Bruce Springsteen "We Shall Overcome," Cam'ron "Killa Season," Coup "Pick A Bigger Weapon," Eleventh Dream Day "Zeroes and Ones," Elf Power "Back to the Web," Mark Knopfler & Emmylou Harris "All The Road Running," Rakes "Capture/Release," Secret Machines "Ten Silver Drops," Starlight Mints "Drowaton," Streets "The Hardest Way To Make An Easy Living," Taking Back Sunday "Louder Now," Tom Verlaine "Around" and "Songs and Other Things"

Derrick: I have to start by saying that I went into this movie with high hopes. I just knew this would be the movie to show audiences that it is possible to make a good video game movie. Man, was I ever wrong.

Chris: "Silent Hill" is supposed to be based on the video game, not video games by the same name. Yet once again the movie company takes things from all the games and f.u.b.a.r.'s a movie that could have been good if they had stuck to just one of the games and not tried to add all the things from the different sequels.

Derrick: In "Silent Hill, Rose Da Silva (Radha Mitchell) takes her daughter Sharon (Jodelle Ferland) to the town that her daughter whispers about in her sleep and is faced with monsters, a cult and the mysterious connection between her child and the town. The story was very unclear.

Chris: The movie seemed thrown together. It felt like the story was just thrown together from all the games and they didn't take time to make the story the prominent focus of the film.

Derrick: I never got the feeling it was rushed, just that maybe the director tried too hard to make an interesting story but ended up complicating things instead by omitting clarifying information. A little more time on the story and this would have been much better.

Chris: I think they were trying to incorporate elements from all the games but there was that lack of clarity in story that seriously detracted from the film.

Derrick: One good thing I can say about the film was that it was beautiful to look at. The atmosphere was just as spooky in the movie as it was in the game. I can't think of a video game movie that resembles its electronic counterpart better than this.

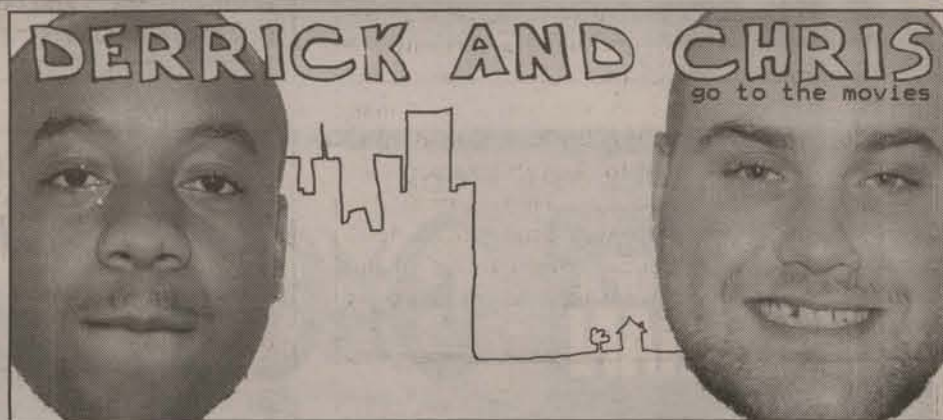
Chris: It did look close to the game; I will give it that, and it was spooky but they didn't give us the follow through. You get to see one bad guy (possibly the coolest) for a few seconds and then you don't see him again at all; that's not enough to make me feel the fear or get the effect of the creature.

Derrick: No kidding. He was by far the freakiest character in the movie but got the least face time. And what was the deal with Cybil (Laurie Holden) being dressed like a stripper? I've never seen cops dress like that on my block.

Chris: No joke. I have never seen a police officer wearing skin-tight leather pants ever. Radha Mitchell needs to take a refresher course in acting because her performances have gone down hill since "Man on Fire" and "Finding Neverland."

Derrick: I agree. Her performance was terrible to say the least. I'm sure that's partly to blame on the crappy script. Sean Bean did a pretty good job as the husband. Aside from that, there were no stand-out performances.

Chris: That's true. The acting was horrible. Sean Bean gave the best performance out of everyone; maybe that's because he had about 10 minutes of screen time and about six lines through out the whole movie..



"Silent Hill"

Starring: Radha Mitchell, Laurie Holden, Sean Bean, Deborah Kara Unger and Jodelle Ferland

Derrick: I meant to comment on how good the music was too. I'm almost positive that some of the music was straight out of the game. It really helped set the mood and establish a sense of danger and panic throughout the movie.

Chris: The music was creepy and definitely helped, but once again I must say that the movie didn't give me the scare factor that the music promised.

Derrick: I feel ya. I loved the fact that all the creatures in the game were actors in costumes and not CG characters. They looked incredible. CG is becoming overused so it was refreshing to see someone avoid the trend.

Chris: That's true; there is a lot of CG over usage in horror movies. I was glad to see that people still use make up and foam body

suits for special effects. Not only does the CG hinder the actor's abilities, but when you can tell it is CG, that takes away from the believability of the film.

Derrick: Don't let pretty visuals and slick presentations cloud your better judgment; this movie is not good. Horrific acting and a lame, confusing story leave us with another movie that didn't capitalize on its potential. Seems like "Silent Hill" was closed off to the rest of the world for a good reason.

Chris: "Silent Hill" wasn't a complete waste of time, but I wouldn't watch it again. The story was hazy and simply confusing. I left with no sense of being scared or remotely disturbed.



Derrick



Chris

CALENDAR OF EVENTS



Thursday, April 27

8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
LSUS Student Exhibition

10 a.m. - 2 p.m.
Spring Fling

Movie Night on the Mall:
"Dukes of Hazard"

Friday, April 28

8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
LSUS Student Exhibition

10 a.m. - 2 p.m.
Spring Fling
Jason DeShaw
Crawfish Boil

Saturday, April 29

8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
LSUS Student Exhibition

Sunday, April 30

8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
LSUS Student Exhibition

Monday, May 1

8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
LSUS Student Exhibition

Tuesday, May 2

8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
LSUS Student Exhibition

10:25 a.m. - 11:25 a.m.
Stress Free Zone
UC Lobby

Wednesday, May 3

8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
LSUS Student Exhibition

Thursday, May 4

8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
LSUS Student Exhibition

10:25 a.m. - 11:25 a.m.
Stress Free Zone
UC Lobby

10:30 a.m.
Biology Club
Final Meeting

Movie Night on the Mall:
"Harry Potter and the
Goblet of Fire"

Every time you don't write for the Almagest God kills a family of penguins.



The Almagest is in search of semi-dedicated writers who want to get some of their crap published for dozens of regulars to read and many more to use as a makeshift umbrella or birdcage lining.

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